

HDMU1

San Francisco
SHANTIES
*and Sea Songs of
California's Gold Rush*

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Holdstock & Murphey

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<p>SIDE A OH CALIFORNIA • SANTY ANA • SACRAMENTO CALLERFORNEY • JOHN KANAKA • COMING AROUND THE HORN</p>	<p>© © 1996 Dick Holdstock and Tom Murphey</p>
<p>WHISKY JOHNNY • HO FOR CALIFORNIA</p>	<p>1401 Poleline Rd.</p>
<p>SIDE B HUMBUG STEAMSHIP COMPANIES • SHANGHAI BROWN</p>	<p>Davis, CA 95616</p>
<p>A RIPPING TRIP • THE FIVE GALLON JAR • CALIFORNIA BOY</p>	<p>Dick (916) 756-8331</p>
<p>HOG EYE MAN • THE DYING CALIFORNIAN • HOMEWARD BOUND</p>	<p>Tom (707) 746-6147</p>

Dick Holdstock: Vocals, Guitar, and Mandolin
Tom Murphey: Vocals, Guitar, Jaw Harp, and Banjo
Carol Holdstock: Vocals
Jon Berger: Fiddle
Jeff Crossley: Acoustic Bass.

The shanty chorus: Richard Adrianowitz, Revell Carr, Peter Kasin,
Denis Franklin, Allan Macleod, Brian Murphey, Travis Pratt,
Ricky Rackin, Bruce Sherman, and Mayne Smith.

Recorded and mixed March 1996 by **Neil Jay Young**
at Canyon Studio, Box 13, Canyon, CA 94516
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For a complete set of words, send \$2.00 for
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For additional recordings and for bookings contact:

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San Francisco SHANTIES and Sea Songs of California's Gold Rush

When gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill on January 24, 1848, the news spread around the world with the speed of wind driven ships. Seamen on the "clippers" added verses to their shanties telling of "plenty of gold" to be had in California. On the east coast of the U.S., thousands formed syndicates and bought any vessel they could afford to make the passage around Cape Horn, seeking instant wealth. This collection of uniquely Californian shanties and sea songs was gathered over several years from a variety of sources. Most of the shanties are from the writings of Stan Hugill, who took a keen interest in San Francisco's waterfront, the Barbary Coast. John A. Stone and John Nichols were among the early group of miners who wrote parodies to Steven Foster and minstrel melodies. Stone, who wrote under the pseudonym of "Old Put", provides a fascinating and humorous (though often grim) portrait of one of the most amazing and turbulent periods of American history. We hope you enjoy these songs as much as we do.

SIDE A

1. **OH CALIFORNIA:** John Nichols wrote this song on board the bark *Elisa* on its way from New England to San Francisco in November 1848. This is probably the first California gold rush song of the sea. Judging by some of the mine tailings and other mining damage in the California foothills, the "forty-niners" kept the promise of "scraping the mountains clean and draining the rivers dry".

2. **SANTY ANA:** Gleaned from many sources, this shanty gives as many of the California verses that we could find and includes a sampling of the verses dealing with the U.S. war against Mexico. Strange, isn't it, that gold was first discovered just nine days before the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo February 2, 1848, which fulfilled U.S. manifest destiny by taking California from Mexico?

3. **SACRAMENTO:** This optimistic shanty is a composite of verses from a variety of sources. Hugill theorizes that Steven Foster got the melody for "Camptown Races" from this shanty. The chorus inspired many sailors to jump ship in San Francisco to seek their fortunes in the mines.

4. **CALLERFORNEY:** According to A.L. Lloyd, this song was printed in 1849 in "Songs of the Bards of the Tyne". J.P. Robson, of Newcastle, didn't waste any time getting this song out after the first news arrived that gold was discovered in California. The threat of "unicorns and crocodiles" didn't keep many Europeans from leaving home and hearth in search of gold!

5. **JOHN KANAKA:** In the 1840's, Hawaiians and other Polynesians were frequently crew members on board sailing vessels in the Pacific Ocean. "Tulai-ae" is the pronunciation Stan Hugill insisted must be used. Verses in this version are from several sources.

6. **COMING AROUND THE HORN:** John A. Stone ("Old Put") published this song in 1855. At first, Cape Horn was the route of choice for those rushing to the gold fields. Groups like those described in this song were formed at all major New England ports, buying up hundreds of vessels of questionable sea worthiness. Unlike many such vessels, this one made it! Hundreds of ships were abandoned in San Francisco Bay and left to rot.

7. **WHISKY JOHNNY:** Carl Sandburg says that Robert Frost learned a version of this shanty on the docks of San Francisco. Our version is almost all from Stan Hugill, who says the verses came from Jimmy Sexton, Arthur Spencer, and other veteran seamen. Here we see one of the first warnings that things weren't all "golden" out west. Sailors on the "Barbary Coast" soon learned to "watch your drink, when you come from sea!"

8. **HO FOR CALIFORNIA:** This song of excitement about the prospect of riches was published in 1851 by the Hutchinson Family in New York. The last stanza refers to the raging controversy about slavery in California. Two public meetings in San Francisco in 1849 voted that their delegate to the statehood convention would oppose the introduction of slavery to California.

SIDE B

1. **HUMBUG STEAMSHIP COMPANIES:** Stone, in this song, tells an important story of the competition for passengers on the return trip from San Francisco via Panama. *The Golden Gate* and the *Yankee Blade* both sank with a combined loss of 253 lives and almost \$2,000,000.

2. **SHANGHAI BROWN:** Stan Hugill says this shanty was used at capstan and pumps. Shanghai Brown's place was on Davis Street, and he had the reputation of being one of the most successful crimps of the Barbary Coast. As was the practice, the crimp who supplied the crews for the "hell ships" was given the sailors' first month's pay, so Jack was "feeding a dead horse" for the first month at sea.

3. **A RIPPING TRIP:** This highly descriptive song to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel" is from "Put's Golden Songster," 2nd edition, 1858. The tale of the early steamers, pressed into service for the trip to San Francisco via Panama, speaks of all the hazards (except the yellow fever peril) encountered while crossing the swampy Isthmus.

4. **THE FIVE GALLON JAR:** Stan Hugill loved to sing this song about one of San Francisco's most famous crimps. He always explained that he had no idea why the chorus is about the lowlands of Virginia. Nevertheless, Larry's infamous jar of drugs has become the stuff of legend among seamen.

5. **CALIFORNIA BOY:** This song is of special significance to Carol, since her Scottish highlander great, great grandfather was murdered in the California gold fields in 1854, leaving his wife to raise six children in New York. This version is from a 1957 Riverside recording by Pat Foster and Dick Weissman.

6. **HOG EYE MAN:** Captain W.E. Whall wrote in 1910 that a hog-eye was a type of barge used on the California coast. There is, however, no evidence to substantiate this idea. One thing we do know is that older versions were infamous for their sexual innuendo. Our version comes from a variety of sources.

7. **THE DYING CALIFORNIAN:** This song first appeared in the "New England Diadem and Rhode Island Temperance Pledge," February 9, 1850. The words are said to be based on a letter telling of a New Englander's death on his way to California. Because of its beauty and significance, it is still often sung by "shape note" groups today.

8. **HOMEWARD BOUND:** After the rugged trip west and the disappointment and hardships of the gold fields, many of the surviving gold seekers were delighted to head for home. Sidney Robertson Cowell recorded Captain Leighton Robinson singing this version of this popular shanty in Belvedere, California in 1939. Most of the words used here were from this recording which is available from the Library of Congress.

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